

District of Columbia Public Schools
2009 Summer Reading List for Rising 5th Grade Students

Author	Title	Synopsis
Allison, Jennifer	Gilda Joyce: Psychic Investigator	The summer before ninth grade, intrepid Gilda Joyce invites herself to the San Francisco mansion of distant cousin Lester Splinter and his thirteen-year-old daughter. She uses her purported psychic abilities and detective skills to solve the mystery of the mansion's boarded-up tower.
Alvarez, Julia	How Tia Lola Came to Stay	Although ten-year-old Miguel is at first embarrassed by his colorful aunt, Tia Lola, when she comes to Vermont from the Dominican Republic to stay with his mother, his sister, and him after his parents' divorce, he learns to love her.
Armstrong, Alan	Whittington	Whittington, a feline descendant of Dick Whittington's famous cat of English folklore, appears at a rundown barnyard plagued by rats and restores harmony while telling his ancestor's story.
Avi	Something Upstairs	When he moves from Los Angeles to Providence, Rhode Island, Kenny discovers that his new house is haunted by the spirit of a black slave boy who asks Kenny to return with him to the early nineteenth century and prevent his murder by slave traders.
Balliett, Blue	Chasing Vermeer	When seemingly unrelated and strange events start to happen and a precious Vermeer painting disappears, eleven-year-olds Petra and Calder combine their talents to solve an international art scandal.
Birdsall, Jeanne	The Penderwicks	While vacationing with their widowed father in the Berkshire Mountains, four lovable sisters, ages four through twelve, share adventures with a local boy, much to the dismay of his snobbish mother.
Bredsdorff, Bodil	The Crow-girl: The Children of Crow Cove	After the death of her grandmother, a young orphaned girl leaves her house by the cove and begins a journey which leads her to people and experiences that exemplify the wisdom her grandmother had shared with her.
Bridges, Ruby	Through My Eyes	Ruby Bridges recounts the story of her involvement, as a six-year-old, in the integration of her school in New Orleans in 1960.
Clements, Andrew	A Week in the Woods	The fifth grade's annual camping trip in the woods tests Mark's survival skills and his ability to relate to a teacher who seems out to get him.
Colbert, Jan, ed.	Dear Dr. King: Letters from Today's Children...	Collection of letters to the slain civil rights leader by children age seven to thirteen.
Curtis, Christopher	Bud, Not Buddy	Ten-year-old Bud, a motherless boy living in Flint, Michigan, during the Great Depression, escapes a bad foster home and sets out in search of the man he believes to be his father--the renowned bandleader, H.E. Calloway of Grand Rapids.
Dorris, Michael	Sees Behind Trees	A Native American boy with a special gift to "see" beyond his poor eyesight journeys with an old warrior to a land of mystery and beauty.

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Duggleby, John	Story Painter	A biography of the African-American artist who grew up in the midst of the Harlem Renaissance and became one of the most renowned painters of the life of his people.
Erdrich, Louise	Birchbark House	Omakayas, a seven-year-old Native American girl of the Ojibwa tribe, lives through the joys of summer and the perils of winter on an island in Lake Superior in 1847.
Funke, Cornelia	Inkheart	Twelve-year-old Meggie learns that her father Mo, a bookbinder, can "read" fictional characters to life when an evil ruler named Capricorn, freed from the novel "Inkheart" years earlier, tries to force Mo to release an immortal monster from the story.
Gaiman, Neil	Coraline	A graphic novel adaptation of the Neil Gaiman story in which Coraline, looking for excitement, ventures through a mysterious door into a world that is similar, yet disturbingly different from her own, where she must challenge a gruesome entity in order to save herself, her parents, and the souls of three others.
Green, Michelle Y.	A Strong Right Arm	Mamie "Peanut" Johnson, had to overcome the obstacles of gender and race to pursue her dream of playing baseball, and who finally got her chance when she and other African-American women were invited to play in the Negro Leagues after male players were allowed on major league teams.
Hale, Shannon	Rapunzel's Revenge	Rapunzel, having grown up in a lovely castle with the woman she thought was her mother, is placed in a very tall hollow tree as punishment after her curiosity prompts her to climb the castle wall and look at the ruin of the world beyond her home, but she is able to escape and with the help of Jack, embarks on a plan to free the land from the grip of the witch.
Hamilton, Virginia	M.C. Higgins the Great	As a slag heap, the result of strip mining, creeps closer to his house in the Ohio hills, fifteen-year-old M.C. is torn between trying to get his family away and fighting for the home they love.
Henkes, Kevin	Bird, Lake, Moon	Twelve-year-old Mitch, spending the summer with his grandparents at Bird Lake after his parents' separation, becomes friends with ten-year-old Spencer, who has returned with his family to the lake where his little brother drowned years earlier, and as the boys spend time together and their friendship grows, each of them begins to heal.
Hiaasen, Carl	Flush	With their father jailed for sinking a river boat, Noah Underwood and his younger sister, Abbey, must gather evidence that the owner of this floating casino is emptying his bilge tanks into the protected waters around their Florida Keys home.

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Hunter, Erin	Into the Wild	Dr. DeWilde and his ravenous wolves pursue three sisters--Storm, the inheritor of a special musical pipe, the elder Aurora, and the baby Any--flee into the woods and begin a treacherous journey filled with many dangers as they try to find a way to defeat their pursuer and keep him from taking the pipe and control of the entire land.
Jackson, Tom	Zany Miscellany	An illustrated compendium of strange, interesting facts about a variety of topics.
Janeczko, Paul	A Foot in the Mouth	Collection of over three dozen illustrated rhyming poems, with tongue twisters and bilingual pieces, drawn from contemporary and classic literary sources and anonymous authors.
Kessler, Liz	Tail of Emily Windsnap	After finally convincing her mother that she should take swimming lessons, twelve-year-old Emily discovers a terrible and wonderful secret about herself that opens up a whole new world.
Kinney, Jeff	Diary of a Wimpy Kid	Greg records his sixth grade experiences in a middle school where he and his best friend, Rowley, undersized weaklings amid boys who need to shave twice daily, hope just to survive, but when Rowley grows more popular, Greg must take drastic measures to save their friendship.
Lauber, Patricia G.	Lost Star: The Story of Amelia Earhart	Traces the life of Amelia Earhart who became the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean, and then she mysteriously disappeared in 1937 while attempting to fly around the world.
McKissack, Patricia	Porch Lies: Tales of Slicksters, Tricksters and Other Wily Characters	A collection of nine original tales drawn from African American oral tradition that blends history and legend with sly humor, creepy horror, villainous characters, and wild farce.
Mead, Alice	Junebug	An inquisitive young boy who lives with his mother and younger sister in a rough housing project in New Haven, Connecticut, approaches his tenth birthday with a mixture of anticipation and worry.
Naylor, Phyllis	Shiloh	Marty finds a lost beagle in the hills behind his West Virginia home, and tries to hide it from his family and the dog's real owner, a mean-spirited man know to shoot deer out of season and to mistreat his dogs.
Nelson, Kadir	We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball	The history of Negro League baseball teams, discussing owners, players, hardships, wins, and losses; and including illustrations.
O'Dell, Scott	Island of the Blue Dolphins	An account of the courage and self-reliance of an Indian girl who lived alone for eighteen years on an isolated island off the California coast when her tribe emigrated and she was left behind.
O'Sullivan, Joanne	101 Ways You Can Help Save the Planet Before You're 12!	An illustrated guide that describes 101 ways that young children can help the environment, such as cutting down on water use, creating a compost bin, saving paper, and eating litter-free lunches.

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Paterson, Katherine	Bridge to Terabithia	The life of a ten-year-old boy in rural Virginia expands when he becomes friends with a newcomer who subsequently meets an untimely death trying to reach their hideaway, Terabithia, during a storm.
Polacco, Patricia	Pink and Say	The friendship of Pink, a fifteen-year-old African-American Union soldier, and Say, his poor white comrade, as one nurses the other back to health from a battle wound and the two of them are imprisoned at Andersonville. Based on a true story.
Prelutsky, Jack, ed.	Read a Rhyme, Write a Rhyme	A collection of complete and incomplete illustrated poems that encourage children to write.
Rex, Adam	Frankenstein Takes the Cake	Poems about the bad habits, anxieties, and other fears and foibles of monsters, including selections about Frankenstein's wedding.
Robinson, Sharon	Safe at Home	Elijah Breeze, a ten-year-old African American boy, moves back to New York City with his mother and attends a summer baseball camp as he tries to make new friends and adapt to urban ways.
Ryan, Pam Munoz	Becoming Naomi Leon	When Naomi's absent mother resurfaces to claim her, Naomi runs away to Mexico with her great-grandmother and younger brother in search of her father.
Rylant, Cynthia	Missing May	After the death of the beloved aunt who has raised her, twelve-year-old Summer and her uncle Ob leave their West Virginia trailer in search of the strength to go on living.
Scieszka, Jon	Math Curse	When the teacher tells her class that they can think of almost everything as a math problem, one student acquires a math anxiety which becomes a real curse.
Schanzer, Rosalyn	George vs. George	An exploration of how the characters and lives of King George III of England and George Washington affected the progress and outcome of the American Revolution.
Selznick, Brian	The Invention of Hugo Cabret	When twelve-year-old Hugo, an orphan living and repairing clocks within the walls of a Paris train station in 1931, meets a mysterious toyseller and his goddaughter, his undercover life and his biggest secret are jeopardized.
Spinelli, Jerry	Maniac Magee	After his parents die, Jeffrey Lionel Magee's life becomes legendary, as he accomplishes athletic and other feats which awe his contemporaries.
Talbott, Hudson	Safari Journal	Children take an imaginary trip to the jungle where they explore a colorful world of plants and animals. This hands -on project book includes easy-to-make props, games, crafts,book links, and pull-out patterns.
Taylor, Mildred	Song of the Trees	During the Depression, a rural black family deeply attached to the forest on their land tries to save it from being cut down by an unscrupulous white man.

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Varon, Sara	Robot Dreams	The enduring friendship between a dog and a robot is portrayed in this wordless graphic novel.
Winthrop, Elizabeth	The Castle in the Attic	A gift of a toy castle, complete with silver knight, introduces William to an adventure involving magic and a personal quest.
Yee, Lisa	Millicent Min, Girl Genius	In a series of journal entries, eleven-year-old child prodigy Millicent Min records her struggles to learn to play volleyball, tutor her enemy, deal with her grandmother's departure, and make friends over the course of a tumultuous summer.